

INVITATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the mixed design study was to examine the perceived effectiveness of leaders who made use of the invitational leadership style of leading their organization. Four research questions emerged throughout the study. The population for this research study consisted of all practicing public school principals in a Midwest state, as well as the teachers who serve under their leadership. Study participants consisted of 178 individuals. The *Perceptions of Leadership Practices* surveys were utilized to collect pertinent data, as well as through semi-structured, open-ended interviews. Findings revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the usages of invitational leadership qualities in effective schools versus less effective schools. It was also concluded that there was no significant difference between the invitational leadership qualities of male and female administrators. Qualitative findings established that teachers believed that the invitational qualities of respect and trust were leadership qualities that were most influential to creating an effective organization, while principals agreed that trust is the predominant influencing factor. The invitational leadership factor of people proved to be the undisputed choice for teachers and principals when striving to establish an overall effective school organization. The active use of invitational leadership was proven in this study to be a leadership model that should be considered effective when seeking to create a healthy, positive, and successful organization. Implications for leadership preparatory programs and recruitment are significant.